

The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY
THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

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No. 7

THE CHEERFUL LETTER.

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A CHRISTMAS CAROL.

"What means this glory round our feet,"
The Magi mused, "more bright than morn?"
And voices chanted clear and sweet,
"To-day the Prince of Peace is born!"

"What means that star?" the shepherds said,
"That brightens through the rocky glen?"
And angels, answering overhead,
Sang, "Peace on earth, good will to men!"

'Tis eighteen hundred years and more
Since those sweet oracles were dumb:
We wait for him like those of yore.
Alas! he seems so slow to come!

But it was said, in words of gold
No time or sorrow e'er shall dim,
That little children might be bold
In perfect trust to come to him.

All round about our feet shall shine
A light like that the wise men saw,
If we our loving wills incline
To that sweet Life which is the Law.

So shall we learn to understand
The simple faith of shepherds then,
And, kindly clasping hand in hand
Sing, "Peace on earth, good will to men!"

For they who to their childhood cling,
And keep their natures fresh as morn,
Once more shall hear the angels sing,
"TO-DAY THE PRINCE OF PEACE IS BORN."

—*James Russell Lowell.*

*Written for the Children's Festival at the
Church of the Disciples, Boston.*

A CHRISTMAS SERMON.

"That ye may know what is the length and
breadth and depth and height; and to know the
love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye
may be filled with all the fulness of God."—*EPH.*
iii. 18.

Nothing in this world is so enduring as
the influence which goes forth from a great
prophetic soul. Amid the darkness and
misery of life, mankind has clung to the
teachers who have shown to it the truth,
beauty, wisdom, providence, and love of God,
who have lifted up the world to something
nobler and better. The most imperial em-
pires pass away. Time devours everything
but truth and love. These are immortal as
the Being from whom they came. They sur-
vive amid the ruins of nations, the devasta-
tions of conquest, the wrecks of institutions.

While we willingly recognize the truth
and the goodness in the other great teachers
of mankind, we cannot but see that the re-
ligion of Christ differs essentially from all
the rest in certain ways, which give us the
assurance that it is to be at last the religion
of the human race, the universal faith of the
world.

I know that there are some persons who
imagine that they have outgrown Christian-
ity; who believe that the religion of Jesus
is obsolete; that the gospel is a failure; that
criticism has damaged the authority of the
New Testament; that science has enabled
us to dispense with God; that we need no
religion, but only humanity; that, instead

of faith in things unseen, we want the sight of things tangible and sensible; instead of prayer, work; instead of the Bible, art and literature; instead of Christ and Christianity, positive knowledge.

These criticisms are not new. There has been no period of the world, since Jesus came, when there have not been criticisms on his religion quite as keen, as searching, and as formidable as any uttered at the present time. But these frosts of doubt and denial have affected only the surface of national life.

For these objections are not directed against genuine Christianity, but only at something which has taken its name,—some theory of miracles, of inspiration, of supernaturalism; some system of doctrines which may all be swept away, and leave the divine life of truth and love untouched. If the Church and all its creeds were abolished, if the Bible were destroyed, the spirit which created them remains. What is the chaff to the wheat? Out of the wheat alone can be made the bread of life.

What reason have we for believing that the religion which Diocletian could not destroy, nor Celsus confute, nor Julian abolish, which the arguments and wit of the great English and French Deists of the last century left more powerful than ever, is not to be overthrown in our day, but to increase in beauty, majesty, and power from age to age, till it becomes the faith of humanity? The answer is in the text: it is because of its length and breadth, its depth and height. It is because it has in it the capacity for unlimited progress, the amplitude which can accept the truths in all other systems and religions, the power of satisfying the deepest wants of the individual soul, and of carrying the human mind and heart up into communion with God and the heavenly world.

By "length" we understand here the power of continuance, of unlimited progress. Some things pass through a cycle of growth and decay. They rise and fall. They run for a time, and then their strength leaves them. There are civilizations which have lived and died, others that remain arrested. The magnificent religion of Egypt long ago came to an end. The systems of Confucius and Buddha have been arrested. They make no further progress. But Christianity is as

full of life now as it was at first. If it could have been killed, it would have long since disappeared under the corruptions which have been grafted upon it by its own disciples: their fierce religious controversies; their hard and cruel creeds; their bitter persecutions; their corrupt hierarchies; their Spanish inquisitions; Bartholomew massacres; their burning of witches; their mad, monkish fanaticism; their alliance with kings to crush the liberty of the people.

All these crimes and follies of Christian churches have crucified Christ afresh, and have put him to open shame. The Son of Man has been more cruelly wounded in the house of his friends than at the hands of his enemies. But the spirit of Christ has survived it all. The power of life in the gospel has thrown off these corruptions one by one. Look round on the Christian churches of America. See how, with no aid from the State, resting only on the heart of the people they extend year by year, advancing with the tide of population over the mountains and prairies to the Pacific Ocean. The churches here are as full of youth and hope and energy as they were a thousand or fifteen hundred years ago. They are the strength of all benevolent enterprises. The helpers in public education, they initiate and aid all human reforms. If any philanthropist wishes to raise funds to teach the blind to see, the deaf to hear, the dumb to speak; if he wishes for help in visiting the prisoner in his cell, in promoting the career of temperance, purity, peace,—where does he naturally go for aid? Always to the churches of Christ. Many outside of the church doubtless assist in such enterprises. But if the churches do not co-operate with them, it excites astonishment and censure; for all men recognize that this is their proper work.

And, while doing this work, Christianity continues ever young, ever vigorous and full of hope. It is a spirit of infinite progress, of perpetual endeavor. Its hope never dies. Its missions are sent out to all the world; and the blessings of the gospel, translated into a thousand languages, are read in the Buddhist temples of China and among the mangroves of the coral islands of the Pacific. The words which go out of its mouth will never return void, but will go

forward to new spiritual conquests, till truth, faith, and love have made the whole world one, till all wars have ceased, all slaves have been set free, and the knowledge of the universal Father cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. Only those who understand this know the length of the gospel of Christ.

And the breadth of the gospel corresponds to its length. Narrow men have made it narrow, and have limited its promises to their own little sects and parties. Intolerance and sectarianism have tried to build fences around it. Priests put up a church fence, and say, "Out of our church there is no salvation." Bigots build a creed-fence, and say, "Unless you believe as we do, and come within our fence, you cannot be a Christian." But the Master, who said, "Suffer little children to come unto me," welcomes to his heart all childlike souls. He who selected a Roman tax-gatherer for his apostle, who gave his divinest truth to the woman of Samaria, who went with publicans and sinners, his spirit cannot be bound by any narrow limitations. It hallows all of life,—the marriage feast of Cana, the sad mourning at the tomb of Lazarus. It touches the infant's brow with its baptismal water, sanctifies the joy of the bridal hour, comforts the sick, the lonely, the dying, and speaks words of immortal hope over the grave where we lay our precious dead. Its merry Christmas makes the mirth of childhood more glad; its Holy Week brings light into the mystery of sin and sorrow; its Easter abolishes death; its Whit-Sunday unites all souls in one divine sympathy of the spirit. This is the work of Jesus.

But the breadth of the gospel is united with an equal depth. Its truth and love penetrate into the inmost recesses of the human soul. It goes abroad widely among the many, because it sanctifies and redeems the solitary heart. It finds us in the midst of our sin, and brings pardon; in our emptiness, and fills us with the life of God; in our despair, and blesses with a new hope; in our dearest hours, and makes us again alive; in our utter loneliness, and fills us with the love of God and man. He who is in Christ is a new creature, a different man. Old things have passed away, all things have become new.

It is experimental Christianity which

plants those roots so deeply in the human soul. It is not opinion, it is knowledge.

What avail the learned criticisms upon the letter of the Scripture as against this living conviction of the heart? Suppose that the Bible is full of errors, that we do not know the author of this or that book, that there are grave difficulties concerning supernatural religion, that we cannot prove by any dialectic process the existence of the soul, of God, of immortality—what of that, since we know them all, by our inmost experience, by our living consciousness? That is the only way by which we can really know anything. It is because the gospel of Jesus reaches such depths in the soul that the reasonings of unbelief and the criticisms of doubt affect its faith so little. The churches over the land are built on realities, not on speculations. They are loved and sustained because they keep the soul alive, the heart generous, the hand active, the convictions strong and clear. Therefore in all centuries there has been an intense love to Jesus as a personal friend. It sings in the "Hymns of the Ages"; in the ardent longings of Saint Bernard and Bonaventura, of Augustine in the fifth century, and Charles Wesley in the eighteenth; in the speculations of Swedenborg and the fiery battle-cry of Luther. Love for Jesus, born of this deep experience, inspired Jacob Boehme and George Fox, George Herbert, and Jones Very. It creates a personal friendship between Jesus himself and every Christian heart, however lowly. This is the rock on which the church stands, and against which the gates of hell shall not prevail. This is the undying strain of love for Christianity which, beginning with John and Paul, is still repeated in our day in the words of a poet belonging to our time and country:—

"In joy of inward peace, in sense
Of sorrow over sin,
He is his own best evidence,—
His witness is within.

"For warm, sweet, tender, even yet
A present help is he;
And faith has still its Olivet,
And love its Galilee.

"Through him the first fond prayers are said
Our lips of childhood frame;

The last low whispers of our dead
Are burdened with his name.

"Deep strike thy roots, O heavenly vine,
Within our earthly sod,
Most human and yet most divine,
The flower of man and God.

"The heart must ring thy Christmas bells,
Thy inward altars raise,—
Its faith and hope thy canticles,
And its obedience, praise."

As low as these roots go down into the human heart and reason, so high do they also ascend into spiritual faith, hope, and love. Those who know that God is their friend, who can talk with him in prayer as a child talks with its mother, who feel an inward sense of immortal life,—they know the love of God, which passeth knowledge; they are filled with all the fulness of God.

"Of this fulness have all received, and grace upon grace." That which makes Christianity live and last and gives to it an undying life is that it meets all the needs of the soul. In the wide range of his sympathy, Jesus is the founder of the coming universal religion. In his mediation of the Holy Spirit to every longing heart, he is able to save to the uttermost those who come to God by him. By his own faith in immortality, he abolishes death, and makes us, even while we are here, to sit in heavenly places with the loved ones who have gone before. Therefore is he Master, guide, friend, brother, Saviour of mankind.

And this is why each new Christmas brings such joy to the world. Coming in the very depths of winter, during its shortest days and darkest hours, it comes with the gladness of spring leaves, summer flowers, autumn fruit. It is merry Christmas to the world. It gladdens the ancestral homes of Old England, brings the Christ-child to the little children of Germany, collects to its midnight masses the people of Catholic Europe, and erects its green Christmas tree to-day all over the United States. The Puritan has withdrawn his opposition to Christmas. Those who all the rest of the year live outside of Christianity are glad to come into it to-day with their little children, to forget for a few hours their doubts and denials, and to be little children themselves.

Christmas is the festival of childhood,

the glorification of infancy. It makes us all little children, too. Old and young partake of a common joy. How large the range of this religion, which includes at one extreme the monkish self-torture and rage for martyrdom of the early church, and at the other sympathizes not only with the joy of earth, but the merriment of childhood! This makes the birth-feast of its Master, "Merry Christmas."—*James Freeman Clarke.*

THE STILL HOUR.

CHRISTMAS GUESTS.

The quiet day in winter beauty closes,
And sunset clouds are tinged with crimson dye,
As if the blushes of our faded roses
Came back to tint this sombre Christmas sky.

We sit and watch the twilight darken slowly;
Dies the last gleam upon the lone hillside;
And, in the stillness growing deep and holy,
Our Christmas guests come in this eventide.

They enter softly,—some with baby faces,
Whose sweet blue eyes have scarcely looked on
life;

We bid them welcome to their vacant places;
They won the peace, and never knew the strife.

And some with steadfast glances meet us gravely,
Their hands point backward to the paths they
trod;

Dear ones, we know how long ye struggled
bravely,
And died upon the battlefield of God.

And some are here whose patient souls were
riven

By our hard words and looks of cold disdain;
Ah! loving hearts, to speak of wrong forgiven
Ye come to visit our dark world again!

But One there is, more kind than any other,
Whose presence fills the silent house with
light:

The Prince of Peace, our gracious Elder Brother,
Comes to his birthday feast with us to-night.

Thou who wast born and cradled in a manger
Hast gladdened our poor earth with hope and
rest;

O best beloved, come not as a stranger,
But tarry, Lord, our friend and Christmas
guest.

—*Good Words.*

The year which has gone brought to us
much and took away much. Christ came
to us this last year whenever truth came to

us,—whenever we saw clearly in our mind the reality of duty and love; of a religious life.

We are living at the end of an old epoch and the beginning of a new one. We can say, looking backward, "It is the last time": "upon us the ends of the world have come." Looking forward, we can say that we are spectators at the creation of a new heavens and a new earth. To-day, as then, he that sits on the throne makes all things new. Christ's coming is to take place in the year on which we are about to enter. He is to come to us all. To all of us it is the last time for many things, the first time for many other things. No hand on the horologue of time points the hour, no bell sounds it out from the skies. We see not any outward change from day to day. Yet each year takes away the old and brings the new.

When you stood by the side of your loved ones during the last year, and bade them farewell, and said, "It is the last time," it was the last time, and the first time, too. It was the last time you saw them on earth, but the first time you thought of them in heaven. From that hour you have stood looking up into heaven: you have been made a companion of saints and angels. At such times we think with sorrow of how much more we might have done for our friends than we did, of opportunities forever gone which we might have used. If you have felt so, then make use of that lesson by doing more for those who remain.

There is no necessary sadness in last times. The sun which sets on our horizon is rising on a western world. Every setting sun is also a rising sun. Every end is also a beginning. Every death is the beginning of another life.

If, then, we look backward on past opportunities, it is that we may look forward on new duties.

Opportunity goes, but inspiration comes. Time goes, but eternity comes: the human goes, the divine comes. The world passes away, and the fashion of it; but heaven comes,—the heaven of a better faith, loftier hope, more generous love, making all things new and fair.—*James Freeman Clarke, "Messages of Faith, Hope, and Love."*

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB.

[Send all matter for this department to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 3 Webster Street, Allston, Mass.]

OFFERS.

Will any mother who would like to have "Gentle Measures in Training the Young," by Jacob Abbott, or any one who would like "Black Beauty," address Miss Langmaid, 2 Gordon Terrace, Brookline, Mass.?

The following books are offered by the Cambridge Branch. Address Mrs. C. W. Kettell, 19 Brewster Street, Cambridge, Mass. Old correspondents will please address the members to whom they have formerly written. In order to receive books from the Cambridge Branch, it will be necessary henceforth to send a reference with the first request.

Educational.

Bradbury's Eaton's "Practical Arithmetic"; Walton's "Written Arithmetic"; "Elements of Algebra," Wentworth; "Chemistry," Comstock; "Elementary Physics," Stewart; "Text-book of Physics," Hall and Bergen; "Elements of Physics," Gage; "Geology," Geikie; Wells's "Natural Philosophy"; Paley's "Evidences"; "First Lessons in Geography," Mitchell; "Lights and Shadows of African History"; "Lights and Shadows of European History"; "Pictorial History of the American Revolution."

Juvenile.

"Jamie's Mittens," "Posies for Children," "Max Wild," "The Boy and the Birds," "The Little Gift," "The Young Rover," "Poems Written for a Child."

Fiction.

"The Mill on the Floss"; "Little Dorrit"; "My Daughter Elinor"; "The Misadventures of John Nicholson"; "Unknown to History," C. M. Yonge; "May Martin"; "The Highlands"; "Old Ironsides, the Story of a Shipwreck"; "The Laird of Norlaw"; "Viola"; "Margret Howth"; "Marjorie Daw," Aldrich; "The Hills of the Shatemuc."

Miscellaneous.

"Astoria," Washington Irving; "Lecture to Young Men," Beecher; "Life of Cromwell," Paxton Hood; "Oliver Cromwell," F. Harrison; "Autobiography of Peter

Cartwright"; "Study for Young Men," Buxton; "Struggles and Triumphs of Forty Years," P. T. Barnum; Harper's "Universal Recipe Book"; "Anecdotes: Social Life"; "The World and its Inhabitants"; "God and the Future Life"; "Heads and Faces: How to study them"; "Faca: An Army Memoir"; "Natural History Plays and Dialogues"; "Wives of England," Ellis; "Letters to Mothers."

Mrs. F. B. Davis, 2 Court Street, Plymouth, Mass., offers the following books: "Miss Angel," Anne Thackeray Ritchie; "It was a Lover and his Lass," Mrs. Oliphant; Trollope's "Autobiography"; "A Sea Queen," Clark Russell; "The Last of her Line"; "Uncle Max," Rosa N. Carey; "Children of Gibeon," Besant; "Hostages to Fortune," Miss Braddon; "Jean," Mrs. Newman; "Scarabæus," Lauza and Harkey; "To Let," B. M. Croker; "Damia," "Clear the Track," E. Werner; "Ships that pass in the Night"; "Stage Land"; "On the Stage and Off"; "Diary of a Pilgrimage"; "In Strange Attire," Black; "Harvest," John Strange Winter; "The Stories of Three Burglars," Stockton; "Dolly," Justin McCarthy; "Robert Elsmere," Mrs. Ward; "The Awakening of Mary Fenwick"; "A Council of Perfection"; "Lord Lisle's Daughter"; "The Ladies Lindores," Oliphant; "Hypatia," Kingsley; "The Courting of Mary Smith"; "The Pathfinder," Cooper.

Magazines.

The Silver Cross, 1895-96 (incomplete); *Century*, 1897, 1886; *Ladies' Home Journal*, 1891-92 (incomplete); *Atlantic*, 1885-87; *Youth's Companion*, 1889-92-94-95-96 (incomplete); *Outlook*, 1897; also odd numbers of various magazines, *Cosmopolitan*, *Harper's*, *Munsey*, *McClure*, *Strand*, *Argosy*, etc.

The following books are offered by the Portsmouth Branch of the Women's Alliance. Address Miss Lucy U. Sise, 3 Court Street, Portsmouth, New Hampshire: "Hymn Book," A. P. Peabody; "Devotional Hymns"; "Stories on the Shorter Catechism"; "The Child at Home," J. S. C. Abbott; "Poetry for Home and School"; "Christian Consolation," A. P. Peabody; "The Christian Life"; "From the Journal of a Bereaved Mother"; "Songs of Seven," Jean Ingelow; "Passages from Whittier";

"Passages from Longfellow"; "Ships that pass in the Night"; "Hymns of the Ages"; "Social Hymn and Tune Book"; "Country By-ways," S. O. Jewett; "Daily Praise and Prayer"; "Pilgrim's Progress," John Bunyan; "The Cloud with the Silver Lining"; "Best Hours," J. P. Richter; "Twin Sisters"; "Questions on the Gospels"; "Our Little One"; "The Vision of Sir Launfal," Lowell; "Christmas Hours"; "Memoir of Eldridge J. Cutler"; "Leaves of Healing"; "Poems," Jean Ingelow; "King's Missive, and Other Poems," Whittier; "Annals of Baby"; "Silent Pastor"; "Modern Classics," Goldsmith, Cowper, Hemans; "Thoughts to Help and Cheer"; "F. Grant & Co.," G. L. Chaney; "Voices of Comfort"; "Christian Believing and Comforting," Huntington; "Quiet Hours"; "The Signet Ring"; "The Pearl"; "The Dairyman's Daughter," Leigh Richmond; "First Lessons in Geometry," Thomas Hill; Longfellow's "Early Poems"; "Bohemia," Maurice; "Due North," M. M. Ballou; "Nature and Life" (sermons), Robert Collyer; "Regeneration," Sears; "Hymns," edited by Hedge and Huntington; "A Forest Hymn," Bryant; "Snow Bound" Whittier; "Arthur Monteith" and "The Scottish Orphans," Blackford; "Silent Comforter," T. B. Haspur; "A Trap to catch a Sunbeam"; "Cottagers of Glenburne"; "Through the Darkness"; short books of Bible verses,— "Daily Food," Havergal's "Forget-me-nots," "Golden Grain," "Golden Text Book"; "Little Alice's Palace"; "Fragrance from Crushed Flowers"; "Ruth Lee"; "The Soul's Cry"; "The Times of the Saviour," Harriet Martineau; "Poems of Home Life"; "The Well-spent Hour"; "Parent's Assistant," "Early Lessons," "Continuation of Early Lessons," and "Rosamond," by Miss Edgeworth; "The Ornaments Discovered"; "The Young Naturalist," A. C. Maut; "Cousin Elizabeth"; "Sarah and her Cousins"; "Paul and Virginia" (English and French copies); "Œuvres de Racine"; "Sunshine in the Soul"; "Lady of the Lake," Scott; Tracts,— "Procrastination," "Alice and Ruth," "Honest Roger," "The Fourth of July," "The Badge"; "John Milton," Macaulay; "The Wreath, Constance de Castile," William Southby; "Artist Biography: Landseer"; "Story of Himself," Mary H. Maxwell; "The Young Cottager," Leigh

Richmond; "One Upward Look Each Day"; "Rab and his Friends"; "Columbia's Emblem"; "The Solar System," Nichol; "Memoir of Mrs. H. L. Ward; "A Love Token for Children"; "Story of Lafayette"; "Sunshine"; "The Changed Cross"; "Tales for Ellen"; "Les Provinciales," Pascal; "Daily Light"; "The Stars and the Earth"; "Questions on Saint Paul's Epistles"; "Memorial of John W. Foster"; "My Thimble," E. B. Hall; "The Release," Charlotte M. Younge; "Chemical Catechism"; "Elements of Geometry and Trigonometry," Legendre; "The Mogul Emperors of Hindustan," Holden; Levizac's "French Grammar"; "Greenwood Leaves"; "Woodland Tales"; "My Mother"; "The Homeward Path"; "Story of Philip Methnen," Mrs. J. H. Needell; "One of the Duanes," Hamilton; "Elements of Geometry"; "Lettres d'Eugénie de Guérin"; "The Ralstons," F. Marion Crawford; "Conjugaison des Verbes Français"; "Lady's Cabinet Album"; "Beautiful Joe," Marshall Saunders; "Ersilia"; "The School Boy," J. S. C. Abbott; "French Conversation," A. Bolmar; "The Young man from Home," J. A. James; "Young Man's Guide"; "Bessie White"; "Lucy and her Friends"; "Grammar of Natural and Experimental Philosophy," Blair; "Poems," O. W. Holmes; "Looking Upward," Charles Wellbeloved; "Locksley Hall," Tennyson; "Hilda and her Doll"; "Lizzie's Secret"; "Emily Milman"; "Memoir of a Brother," Thomas Huger; "Walter Seyton"; "Story of a Genius"; "Oscar," Aimwell; "The Garden," Parley; Andrews's "Latin Exercises"; Walker's "Geometry"; "Sequel to Putnam's Reader"; Greenleaf's "Arithmetic"; Emerson's "Arithmetic"; Weld's "Latin Lessons and Reader"; Comstock's "Chemistry"; Davies's "Analytical Geometry"; Newman's "Rhetoric"; Porter's "Rhetorical Reader"; "Robertsonian System of Teaching French"; Bailey's "Algebra"; Colburn's "Algebra"; Colburn's "Arithmetic"; "Key to Day's Algebra"; "Viri Romae"; Ladreyt's "Models of French Conversation"; Ladreyt's "Littérature Française"; "French Reader"; Moor's "Virgil"; Anthon's "Cicero"; "Residence on a Georgia Plantation," Frances Anne Kemble; Andrews and Stoddard's "Latin Grammar"; Wentworth's and

Reed's "Primary Arithmetic"; Warner's "Speller"; Cornell's "Geography"; "Abrège de la Grammaire Française," Noël et Chapsal; Wanostrocht's "Grammar of the French Language"; "One Hundred French Fables," A. Bolmar; Davies's "Algebra"; "Religious Souvenir"; "Words of Jesus"; "Hymns for Sunday-school; "Guide to Knowledge"; Mitchell's "School Atlas"; "Rudder Grange," Stockton; "Zenobia," William Wase; "King Solomon's Mines," Rider Haggard; "Standard Recitations"; "The Scholar in a Republic," Wendell Phillips; "The Parlor Muse"; "Exploits of Brigadier Gerard," Conan Doyle; "Memorial Service on Wendell Phillips's Seventy-fourth Birthday"; "Silas Marner," George Eliot; "The Broken Shaft" (short stories); "The Woman's Conquest of New York"; "Lessons on Practical Subjects"; "The Oiled Feather"; "The Vigilants of Montana," Thomas J. Drisdale; "The New Year's Bargain," Susan Coolidge; "Feats on the Fiord," Harriet Martineau; "Lulu's Library," Louisa Alcott; "How New England was made," F. A. Humphrey; "The Century Book for Young Americans"; "Kidnapped," R. L. Stevenson; "Interrupted Current," Howard York; "Sparks of Genius," Kellogg; also odd numbers of various magazines.

REQUESTS.

Read directions at beginning of Book Club before writing.

Libraries.

Standing requests for libraries from:—

Mrs. O. A. Langston, Sidney, Comanche County, Texas;

Mrs. C. S. Stowell, Magnolia, Boulder County, Colorado;

Mr. Davis M'Carn, Anamosa, Iowa;

Mrs. D. Jayne, Jamestown, Chautauqua County, New York;

Mrs. Emma Miner, Lisbon, New Hampshire;

Stephen D. Rhoden, La Pine, Crenshaw County, Alabama;

Mrs. Isadore E. Rice, Oakland, Oregon.

Those who send offers and requests for the Book Club will do us a kindness by noting the following suggestions: 1. Please write very clearly. 2. Do not use a pencil. 3. Do not use contractions, especially names

of States (as Cal. and Col. for California, Colorado). 4. Write on one side only of the paper. 5. Do not forget to give your full address. (The State is now and then omitted.) 6. Do not send matter for the Book Club to Miss Clarke, but to Mrs. Nichols, the Book Club secretary.

Mrs. J. Porter, Parkerville, Georgia, asks for cards and children's books for the poor children in her neighborhood.

"Prince of the House of David" and "History of England" are asked for by Mrs. M. A. Leach, Florian, Sabine Post-office, Louisiana.

Mr. T. D. Lamb, Straw, North Carolina, teaching in a poor and destitute district, asks for school-books for the poor children. Intermediate arithmetics, primary geographies, readers, first, second, third, and fourth, and primary grammars, all particularly needed.

Mrs. Carrie M. Dana, San Diego, California, wishes to thank all who have been so kind to her in the past, and hopes to receive the same favor in the future. Also asks if some one will send reading to Mr. S. Kimball, Nestor, California, a shut-in from paralysis.

Miss Rosa Bailey, Saxe, Charlotte County, Virginia, asks for any educational journal.

Eva Coleman, St. Just, Orange County, Virginia, will be glad to receive *Ladies' World* or *Housewife*.

Mrs. Susan Buffington, Catale, Cherokee Nation, Indian Territory, asks that reading be sent to her helpless, crippled boy, fourteen years of age.

Mrs. Alice V. Cook, Isabel, Oregon, a cripple, having lost a part of both feet, and now suffering from rheumatism and neuralgia, which practically makes her a "shut-in," asks for any reading. She especially desires the *Century Magazine* for January, February, April, and December of 1887, also October and November, 1890.

A fifth reader and a geography are asked for by Miss Hattie Clausen, Naper, Boyd County, Nebraska.

Miss Sadie V. Engell, Seward, New York, an invalid for nineteen years, will be very

grateful for any reading to relieve her lonely hours.

William Cribble, Berlin, Ontario, Canada, asks for any of the following books: Watson's "Institutes," Broadus's "Homiletics," Pierson's "Crisis of Missions," Bridge's "Christian Ministry," Upham's "Life of Faith," Whately's "Rhetoric," Shedd's "Christian Doctrine," Thwing's "Drill-book of Vocal Culture," Barrows's "Sacred Geography," Christlieb's "Foreign Missions," Blackburn's "History of Christian Church," Fisher's "Church History," Hopkins's "Law of Love," Haven's "Mental Philosophy."

Mrs. J. B. Gannaway, Allwood, Amherst County, Virginia, would be very glad to receive any of Hawthorne's or E. P. Roe's books. Mrs. Gannaway is confined to the house, and would appreciate any reading.

My address is changed from Saluda, North Carolina, to this little village, a hundred miles down the mountains. It is very cold up there in winter, but one hundred miles gives a great change of climate. I am still on the bed, and no one knows how I have enjoyed the *Harper's* and all the good reading sent me by the *Cheerful Letter* ladies. I gladly pass it on, that it may give all the comfort possible. I would be very glad of any of Elizabeth Stuart Phelps's books except "A Singular Life," which a dear lady sent me. A friend who sent me the *Outlook* has been obliged to stop. I should like to receive it and the *Home Journal*. This must have been a heaven-born idea, sending so much of the best reading to the sick and lonely. Emma M. Backus, Kershaw, Kershaw County, South Carolina.

Mrs. M. C. Medley, Florian, Anson County, North Carolina, writes: "I am a widow; and my house with nearly all its belongings, including books, was burned last spring. I am very fond of good reading, and feel at a great loss since my books were burned. Any kind of good reading will be thankfully received."

Mrs. Fanny C. White, Greenville, Oregon, asks for "Beautiful Joe."

Mrs. Lena Lybarger, 1022 Boundary Street, Olympia, Washington, will be glad of reading.

We are settled in our new home; and already I have formed new acquaintances, and found several who are fond of reading. I am lending my books; but I have no papers or magazines to give away, as I had in Iowa. So anything sent to me for distribution will be very acceptable. My husband will engage in evangelistic work this winter, and I shall be alone with my little family part of the time. So I shall be very glad of something new to read.

I have another dear baby boy, born in August. Can some one suggest a name for him? We now have five boys and two girls. The oldest is thirteen.

The children would like to have the *Youth's Companion* for this year, also any old *St. Nicholas* and a good speaker. I would like to have "Dred," "Barriers Burned Away," and "The Hoosier School-master," or any of Eggleston's books.

We will do all the good we can with what is sent to us. There is no library in this place. Mrs. Carrie Smith, Chase, Rice County, Kansas.

Miss Crump writes: "I am very anxious for Kingsley's 'Water Babies,' Ruskin's 'King of the Golden River,' and 'The Boy's King Arthur' for use in a small private school, which as yet has no library. Any other juvenile books would also be most acceptable. Address Miss Mary Armistead Crump, Box 102, Culpeper, Virginia."

Miss Harriet B. Bowman, 48 Montgomery Street, Newburg, Orange County, New York, would like to receive the *Christian Register* regularly, and is willing to pay the postage.

Charles H. Harrington, Florian, North Carolina, is very anxious to get some reading matter and school-books. He is very poor, and not able to buy the books he needs.

(It is best to indicate what school-books are needed.)

The address of Miss Edna Pharis, which was not given in the October number, is Douglas, Rockingham County, North Carolina.

Mrs. Caroline W. Putnam informs applicants that the books she offered have all been distributed.

THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL.

[Contributions for this department may be sent to Mrs. J. S. Howe, Brookline, Mass.]

We are very glad to print the following article, giving some of the views of one of our readers, and hope others will feel disposed to follow her example.

HINTS TO YOUNG PARENTS.

I have seen in my long life of sixty years children whose feelings had been hurt by their older friends from mere thoughtlessness, apparently. People often say something that a little thought would show might very much hurt a little child's feelings. For instance, a stranger to the child comes for a visit to the mother. Something had occurred; and the little one had been justly rebuked, just before the guest's arrival. The little one is hardly composed enough to see a stranger, and fearful that her face will betray that she has had trouble. Very likely the mother will say: "Katy has been very bad to-day. Aunt Jennie will not want to see such a bad girl." Is it not cruel to so hurt a poor little child? Children are quite as sensitive as grown folks, often more so; for it seems such a dreadful thing, one never to be gotten over in a lifetime, for a stranger to have such an impression of you.

Then I wish to call attention to the conduct of children when out with mamma making calls, say, on near friends, where no ceremony is used and the child is not afraid. The mother has allowed the child to tease her at home in the following way. Mamie says something to her mamma, who is interested in her book or work, so she at first fails to notice. Again the child asks, "May I go out in the yard?" or some other question. Mamma does not answer. Then Mamie pulls mamma's dress at last. The answer is given: "Yes, do go along. You bother me almost to death. I can't have a moment's quiet." Now, when calling, mamma is busy talking; and the child does the same thing. Mamma does not care at all; but the lady, who may be an invalid, is keenly alive to the child's actions and requests. At last, after repeated efforts, mamma notices the child, but not until she begins to fret in a very disagreeable tone. Do not let a child tease, to begin with. At-

tend at once to its requests, unless some one is speaking, when a quiet, "Wait a bit," is all that is necessary to say.

I saw once, when crossing a ferry, a very nicely dressed lady and her little boy, a bright, beautiful, active boy, about five years old. It was all new to him. So, as he walked by his mother, he asked questions. Just as they passed me, I heard him say: "Mamma, what makes the water look so white? Do they put soap in it?" having seen some washing done, evidently. His beautiful mother looked very much annoyed, as she at last answered him: "I don't know. Do stop asking questions. You will drive me crazy."

Another thing I would advise my young friends, not to insist on the little one saying over her piece or playing on an instrument or showing off in any way, unless the child is willing.

One lady came to see me with two little girls. She says: "Now this auntie wants to hear you sing your school songs. You will, I know; for it will give her great pleasure, for she has no little girls, and has to live here all the time." So, of course, although the girls were very shy, they were willing to do their best. A very different way some would have taken, and spoiled it all.

I could say much more about the little ones and their treatment, but think this enough for once from AUNT BETH.

AMUSEMENT COLUMN.

[Please send all material for this department to Miss E. D. Chapman, 34 Buckingham Street, Cambridge, Mass.]

A CHRISTMAS ENTERTAINMENT.

A great deal of fun at a Christmas party may be had by preparing beforehand little gifts for the family or guests,—gifts of the simplest kind. These on Christmas Eve are tied up in paper parcels, to which are attached long strings. The gifts are hidden in different places, and the strings are twisted in and out of the furniture or tangled together. When the fun begins, each person chooses a string, and, taking hold of the end of it, follows it in and out until at last the present is found.

ENIGMA.

I am composed of 60 letters.

This is the time of 57, 47, 20, 60, when

we have a great deal of 32, 50, 7, and make 9, 29, 37, 5, 15. For 54, 4, 34, 38, 7, 51, 19, 42, 48 comes this 41, 33, 53, 8, 28, then we hang up the 46, 6, 43, 2, 13, 30, 40, 52, 22, sing 44, 59, 31, 25, 13, 11, and have a fine fat 23, 45, 24, 39, 55, for dinner. Then we light the 3, 10, 17, 26, 13, 58, 48, on the tree, when it grows dark; and in comes 43, 16, 53, 8, 1, 2, 7, 13, 56, 50, 43, in fur from 36, 30, 42, 18, to foot, with a 12, 14, 35, 21, on his back. Oh, the dear old man! what a lot of pretty things he has! Perhaps there may 49, 22, something for 15, 52, 50.

My whole is a quotation from an early English poet.

CONUNDRUMS.

1. When does a plebeian rise above a patrician?
2. How long does a widower mourn?
3. Why is a lame dog like a school-boy adding six and seven together?
4. A room with eight corners had a cat in each corner, seven cats before each cat, and a cat on every cat's tail. What was the total number of cats?

CHARADE.

I.

My first is what Gladstone likes.

My second is what Gladstone hates.

My whole (as a sentence) is what Gladstone likes to do.

My whole (as a word) is where Gladstone's enemies would like him to be.

II.

My first is made of corn that's ground,

My second in every house is found,

My whole just peeps above the ground,
And wears a little cap that's round.

Answers to puzzles in November number:—

ANAGRAM.

The golden-rod is yellow,

The corn is turning brown,

The trees in apple orchards

With fruit are bending down.

The gentian's bluest fringes

Are curling in the sun.

In dusty pods the milkweed

Its hidden silk has spun.

ALPHABETICAL PUZZLES.

I.

1. Panama. 2. Toronto. 3. Mississippi.
4. New Jersey. 5. Alabama. 6. Caraccas.
7. Savannah.

II.

G E N
e k r e
a a i d
R E

BEHEADINGS.

1. Abroad. 2. Shear. 3. Classes. 4. Sport.
5. Grasps. 6. Branch. 7. Spin.

NOTES AND LETTERS.

I should like to announce the death of Mrs. Bessie Bristow, Junction City, Oregon. She died of consumption in July. She was a member of the Cheerful Letter Exchange. I sent her a copy of the paper every month.

Mrs. Sarah Cornelia Lange died at her home in Olympia, September 13, after an illness of two years (consumption). Mrs. M. E. Oades, Olympia, Wash.

Mrs. Carrie Smith, Chase, Rice County, Kansas (whose letter appears in another column), writes us that she would be glad to have several copies of "Black Beauty," and can make good use of them. She says: "I have calls for reading matter already, in my new home. A neighbor living next door has seven children under sixteen."

OKLAHOMA CITY, October 29.

Editor Cheerful Letter,—I wish to thank the friends who have been kind to Mrs. Annie T. Hughes, and to let them know that she is at present a very sick woman. We are trying to take her to her old home in Ohio, where her children have already gone. Friends who have been kind will also be glad to know they are among friends, and will hereafter want for nothing.

Very respectfully,

MARY E. NOTSON.

Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 3 Webster Street, Allston, Mass., would be glad to have the address of the person who is sending the *Outlook* to Mrs. May D. Jones, North Platte, Nebraska.

Dear Sisters,—At the beginning of this month that brings release from drought that has been so grievous, I write in hope of better times. The farming element here is hard pressed and half despondent; but the year will soon be numbered with the others as a little more trying, and will be forgotten. The new year will usher new hope and enterprise. 1898, as it nears the completion of the century, cannot but infuse with its wisdom, governed by the old year, better methods and better aims. I am a farmer, and have suffered with my class; but I see improvement along lines where bread and butter is not in question, and am hopeful of higher good. Our "Love Quilts" are prospering. I know they are doing a little toward broadening and brightening the lives of the lowly. Our toiling sisters meet, and enjoy so much the little rest, refreshments, and loving contest for the pretty quilt. Some helpful reading, music, and chat, with a guiding always toward a lofty ideal, inspires me to hope for greater good; and I am conscious of my privilege, and humbly grateful to all aiding me to help these dear, teachable sisters. I am so busy, so many ways, I hope our Cheerful Letter band will not think me remiss if I do not often write personally. Availing myself of this opportunity, I thank every one fervently for scraps and every token of good will and sympathy. Some of you have not only lifted my hands, but have filled them; and these favors are conscientiously shared. I am kept constantly cheered and inspired. I am so happy to be in your ranks under his orders.

HAPPY SISTER MARY.

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We see that Jesus has just what we long for,—a living, ever-present consciousness of God. We see that sense of Divine Companionship enveloping his whole life, and vitalizing every part of it.—*Scougal*.

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We do not go to heaven, but heaven comes to us. They whose inner eye is opened to see heaven, and they who see it, are in it; and the air to them is thick with angels, like the background of Raphael's "Mother in Glory."—*F. Hedge*.

IMPORTANT NOTICES.

The address of the Editor after December 1 will be Miss L. Freeman Clarke, 91 Mt. Vernon Street, Boston, Mass.

There will be a meeting of the Cheerful Letter Exchange on the first Friday in January at 10.30 A.M. at 25 Beacon Street, Boston. All interested in this work are cordially invited to be present.

Our Book Club department has grown so large that we shall ask of all who in the future write to us for books to send the name of some minister as a reference,—when possible, the minister of the church to which they belong.

We fear that some of our subscribers have the impression that by subscribing for *The Cheerful Letter* they will be sure to receive books. The Book Club has proved an attractive department of our paper; and many of our subscribers are interested in sending books to those who are unable otherwise to obtain them. But we engage only to keep the Book Club open for offers and requests, and that under certain conditions.

We remind all who send parcels or boxes with books, papers, etc., to correspondents or to libraries, that it is absolutely necessary to write at the same time to the receiver, enclosing the receipt which shows that the express or freight charges on the package have been paid. For want of this precaution, valuable packages have never been received. It is not probable that any of our *Cheerful Letter* friends send packages without prepaying them, but it is a common mistake of the express agents to charge the receiver for a prepaid package.

N.B.—PLEASE READ DIRECTIONS AT BEGINNING OF BOOK CLUB BEFORE WRITING FOR BOOKS.

Subscribers to *The Cheerful Letter* are kindly requested to send subscriptions to the *Treasurer*, not to the Editor.

In sending requests or offers of books, it is essential to address these communications to the *Book Club* (Secretary Mrs. W. B. Nichols). If addressed to the Editor these letters are in some cases postponed; in others altogether omitted. See directions in every number of *The Cheerful Letter*.

THE ATTENTION OF ALL READERS OF "THE CHEERFUL LETTER" IS CALLED TO THE FOLLOWING NOTICE:—

It is contrary to the rules of the Cheerful Letter Exchange to allow any one to make use of our paper by addressing letters, asking for money, clothing, or other articles, to those whose names are printed in the paper. This prohibition includes requests to borrow money and the offering of articles for sale. The name of any person who infringes this rule will be dropped from our list; and any one who receives a request of this description is desired by our Executive Committee to return no answer, but to enclose the letter at once to our secretary, Miss Langmaid.

DIRECTIONS.

EDITOR OF "CHEERFUL LETTER,"—Miss L. Freeman Clarke, 91 Mt. Vernon Street, Boston, Mass.

SECRETARY OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Miss Bertha Langmaid, 2 Gordon Terrace, Brookline, Mass.

SECRETARY OF BOOK CLUB OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 3 Webster Street, Allston, Mass.

TREASURER OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Miss Louise Howe, 53 Linden Street, Brookline, Mass., or 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

Subscriptions and renewals should be sent to the treasurer, also all changes of address and requests for discontinuance. The subscription is fifty cents a year. If subscribers do not receive the paper regularly, they are requested to notify Miss Howe at once.

Those not able to subscribe for the paper, but desiring to receive it, may do so by writing to Miss Louise Howe, as above. Please give full name and address. Many of our members take the paper in order to send it to those who are not able to subscribe for it.

Notice that requests for membership and for correspondents go to Miss Langmaid, our secretary; requests for books and offers of books, to Mrs. Nichols; and to Miss Clarke only articles for insertion in the paper (not Book Club matter). All such material should be written on *one side only* of the paper, and sent by the first of the month *before* that in which it is printed.